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IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONVENTION

REVIEW OF REPORTS ON IMPLEMENTATION OF AFFECTED AFRICAN COUNTRY PARTIES, INCLUDING ON THE PARTICIPATORY PROCESS AND ON EXPERIENCES GAINED AND RESULTS ACHIEVED IN THE PREPARATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF NATIONAL ACTION PROGRAMMES

Addendum

COMPILATION OF SUMMARIES AS PRESENTED IN THE NATIONAL REPORTS SUBMITTED BY AFRICAN COUNTRY PARTIES 1/

Note by the secretariat

1. The Conference of the Parties, by its decisions 11/COP.1 and 5/COP.2, requested the secretariat to prepare a report based on the information contained in national reports, to be considered by the Conference of the Parties at its third session. Only African country Parties are required to present their reports to COP.3.

2. Decision 11/COP.1 provided guidelines and procedures for organizing and presenting the national reports and required in particular a summary of the national reports, not exceeding six pages.

3. This document contains the summaries of national reports submitted by 10 African country Parties. The concerned countries are: Cape Verde, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Djibouti, Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea. The secretariat will also make this compilation of summaries of national reports available on the Convention's Website (www.unccd.de) for wider circulation.

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CAPE VERDE

The archipelago of Cape Verde is of volcanic origin, made of nine small inhabited islands, implanted on the SW corner of the Senegalese sea platform, 450 km off the west coast of Africa. The islands do not house any significant mineral resources and have a relatively reduced arable land but a huge EEZ.

They are located on the latitudinal boundaries of the great deserts of the world and in the Atlantic projection of the Sudan-Sahelian Africa. Such a fact greatly explains its semi-arid to arid climate, slightly moderated by the ocean. The islands are cyclically devastated by prolonged and severe drought spells with disastrous consequences for certain ecological systems, the main cause of famine and deaths in the recent past as well as of an important migratory movement.

In essence: (1) the steppes and the herbaceous are to be found on the slopes of mountains, above 1,500 metres; (2) the median altitude mountain ranges house the humid and sub-humid areas; (3) the semi-arid elevated plains are located in deep and imbedded valleys; and (4) low altitude ecosystems are dominated by steppes and the semi-desert ranges that exhibit a remarkable diversification of habitats and landscapes such as dunes, lagoons and salt pits. However, the coastal and marine ecosystems of the archipelago have not been conveniently studied yet.

Those ecosystems have reached an advanced stage of degradation as a result of the expansion of agriculture into marginal land and the consequent over-exploitation of species; urbanization (48 per cent human settlements tend to concentrate in the coastal regions); and the high rate of unemployment and widespread poverty (namely among the young and women who happen to be the key elements as concerns the supply of firewood and drinking water). In some instances, the natural regeneration capacity of the land has been exceeded. Loss of soil layers and fertility as well as biological diversity are exacerbated by prolonged drought spells and rare but markedly torrential rainfall.

In addition to tree planting, rural engineering works, electrification, widespread dissemination and use of butane, etc., public awareness campaigns to address environmental protection needs (including the issue of paper currency and stamps bearing environment-related themes) and other activities in specific domains are being carried out as a means of barring the degradation process and loss of resources.

Strategies and priorities

The country's environmental policies and strategies advocate that sustainable development should be institutionalized and remain participative and supported by the international cooperation. Thus little wonder sustainability is safeguarded in all the major pieces of environment-based legislation and surfaces in the statutes of every department with a role to play in the domain of natural resources conservation and is crystal clear in several development plans.

The National Environment Action Plan (NEAP) - the framework plan - contains the country's environmental strategies. The aims are to ensure an adequate management of natural resources (a national council on the environment will be instituted). As of late, the Government stepped forth with the creation of a Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Environment (MA), as a result of increasing pressure from the public.

Priorities have been set to address institutional issues such as (1) the creation of a national agency to deal with the matter; (2) transfer of technologies, technicians, and knowledge as well as adoption of universally proven norms; (3) international cooperation on regional and sub-regional matters regarding the environment; and (4) ratification of environment-based Conventions.

Furthermore, ongoing activities will be intensified (reforestation, desertification control and the mitigation of the effects of drought), detailed studies on natural resources will be carried out and an earth information system will be established.

The Four (4) National Development Plans (NDP). Over the years, they have incorporated the concept of regionalization and need for decentralization, thus acknowledging that environmental protection requires the involvement of everyone (II NDP) and the need for institutional adjustments (III NDP 1992-1995).

Hence, measures have been designed and taken to adjust norms and procedures and to address reclamation and protection of the environment as a means of fulfilling the programme of the Government.

The IV NDP addresses environmental issues in a holistic way. It acknowledges the existence of an insufficient number of scientific and detailed studies on land use and vocation and the pressing need for a correct management of the territory. The main axis of its strategies and policies is based on the following principle: the growth of the population should be closely linked to the carrying over capacity of the land and sustainability should be defended at all times.

The **NPAP's** 2/ purposed strategy is based on the following principles: (i) sustainability; (ii) decentralization; and (iii) participation and coordination of efforts. Said strategy sets its priorities on improving the productive capacity of the poor and on upgrading the economic infrastructure of disadvantaged communities.

The Tropical Forestry Action Plan's strategy and objectives will address the following priorities:

(a) control of the desertification process;

(b) land reclamation (through reforestation and soils and water conservation activities), to attain:

(c) rational and sustainable exploitation of natural resources.

To carry out the above strategies several pieces of **legislation** have been published, such as the **Environment Outline Law**, the **Land Management and Urban Planning Outline Law** (26 July 1993. Thus they preceded the ratification of the Convention) or are in the making such as the **Forestry Code** and **Soil and Water Conservation Code.**

Institutional and organizational measures

The configuration of the Administration has changed several times over the years, according to priorities, prevailing circumstances and policies (e.g. decentralization, environmental protection, etc.). Although the most recent one (1996) has provided for a more coherent administrative framework with respect to environmental issues, the existing central governmental organizational structure is still heavy and not very functional for that fact.

Seven (7) ministries bear, to some degree or another, a mandate over those environmental 3/ issues falling within their field of expertise. Meanwhile, it is up to the **Ministry of Agriculture** to plan, coordinate, control, monitor, execute and evaluate natural resources and environmental policies.

With so many relevant parties involved, the issue of increased coordination responsibilities emerges. Within the structure of the Ministry of Agriculture, the Executive Secretariat for the Environment (SEPA) is the unit charged with such responsibilities. Likewise, an **Agriculture, Food and Environmental Council** was also created within said structure (1997 4/) to counsel on those subjects. However, it is expected that private participation will be honoured as stipulated in the statutes.

The specialized **Cabinet** charged with **environmental** matters is the upmost executive and policy-making body. Its members include seven ministers.

The **National Water Council** - CNAG - is the management body responsible for hydric resources, presided by the MA and made of representatives of three other ministries.

At the Local level, Law No. 134/IV/95 (3 July 1995) entrusts the municipality with the role of promoting, within its frontier, the formulation of action plans and programmes tailored to protect nature and its resources.

The establishment of specialized local bodies to deal with the issue is also foreseen in said law. To the exception of the municipality of Brava, such specialized municipal bodies have been established or are in the process of being established.

Environment-cum-development organizations (NGOs) and associations, have been created and are present in significant number in almost every community. Their work is narrowly focused and they tend to be very efficient.

Conventions

The Parliament has ratified all three main conventions born out of the 1992 Rio de Janeiro Earth Summit. The United Nations Convention on

Desertification control was ratified on 8 March 1995 and the CILSS reviewed convention, which was signed on 22 April 1994, was ratified through resolution No. 114/IV/95 dated 3 November.

Participation in the formulation and execution of the Action Plan

After ratification of the above Convention, public awareness-building campaigns were started in 1996 and 1997. In February 1996 a specific study on the definition of the participatory approach led to the establishment of a profitable dialogue with the municipalities and local communities. Such activities led to the realization of a national forum (November 1996), a first step towards the formulation of the National Action Programme (NAP).

The recommendations and conclusions drawn at the forum constitute the major guidelines for the execution, under the supervision of SEPA, of the NAP.

Meanwhile, public awareness-building campaigns proceed in the post-forum era with the active participation of a front rank man (France) and support provided by a specific project drafted to encourage the implementation of the Convention on desertification control; said dialogue hasn't been very profitable with the national partners at the central level thus, it has not been possible to develop a more active participation on the part of certain partners at that level; despite the positive results attained from the activities of NGOs, official commitment in their regards has not been sufficient.

Municipal boards specialized in environmental issues

The process leading to their creation shows the need to accommodate all the expectations and worries in order to avoid conflict of interests. Thus, care must be taken to avoid that the resolution of all the environmental matters become the exclusive rights of the authorities. The main task of said board is to carry out public awareness-building campaigns and congregate local efforts, ideas and initiatives with respect to the identification and execution of projects inscribed in the NAP.

Whereas there is a pressing demand being placed on the fragile municipal structures by several programmes and respective action plans (poverty, desertification, biodiversity and forestry); and considering that said programmes seek similar objectives, sometimes they use similar solutions and even share the same project site and priorities areas; now therefore, there rose the need to establish a sole specialized municipal board capable of housing all the development and environmental goals of the above (Development Board).

Furthermore, and as a logical consequence, there is a need to favour access to all the required means to ease participation. Environmental capacity building remains one of the major axis said resources are to be applied.

The consultative approach (partnership agreements included)

Whereas agrarian issues, land degradation processes and the aftermath of drought in Cape Verde are of capital importance, now therefore it is imperative to establish and maintain the most useful links and assure the best coordination ties between the relevant parties, through binding partnership agreements.

The first such development efforts were unleashed in the beginning of 1997. At such time the municipalities were approached with a specific framework document on the subject. Awareness-building campaigns at the level of donors reckon with the active participation of France. The outcome of such activities was the signing of a protocol agreement followed by the formulation of a reference project capable of allowing for the integration of donors' support.

Meanwhile, such process has not gone very far with respect to the municipalities; it is wise to proceed with and further take advantage of local initiatives in the fields of sister-cities agreements signed with foreign municipalities that might become very important instruments with regards the implementation of the action programme in specific areas such as drinking water supply, electrification, etc.

Furthermore, desertification control cannot be successful unless it is founded on a renewed partnership that grants a key role to the rural players. Although no partnership agreement is to be signed at this level, it is of merit to think it over and take into consideration the guidelines set forth by the African Farmers Association Forum held in Dakar as a prelude to the second Conference of the Parties.

Specific measures taken or foreseen within the framework of the NAP 5/

The 1996 Programme of the Government confirms the outward-looking development policy, promotion of the private sector and withdrawal of the State from economic activities.

The issuing economic reforms programmes focus on those initiatives capable of forging the development of economic infrastructure projects, economic and financial reforms, public sector reform, promotion of the private sector, education and professional training, poverty alleviation, etc.

The existing economic environment is favourable for the realization of said reforms. The growth rate of GDP is higher than that of the population (7.2 per cent in 1994 and 7.8 per cent in 1995) and foreign direct investment growth trend is significant as from 1994 through 1998. Said investments are markedly structural in nature and show evidence of an unmistakable bustling and a positive impact on the generation of employment, diversification of economic activities and on the balance of payments.

Furthermore, stability at the macroeconomics environment level is rendered favourable by the permanent dialogue and real reconciliation efforts being deployed under the Social Reconciliation Council.

The family-owned production units, when confronted with severe climatic adversities and with profound socio-economic changes (demographic growth, liberalization of the economies, globalization of trade ...) tend to put additional pressures on the natural resources and, as a consequence, favour the expansion of the phenomena of desertification.

Under such circumstances and according to the "Vulnerability and Adjustment of Agriculture to the Impact of Climate Changes" (INIDA, May 1999, to be published soon) the quality of the natural resource basis is deteriorating since independence, further aggravated by the current drought spell the country is experiencing.

In the long run, it is believed that the loss of top soil layers caused by wind and water erosion mechanisms shall become the most critical agricultural and environmental problem the country will ever face. In the short run, the major challenge is to achieve sustainable use of resources, namely soils and water.

With the aim of improving the public knowledge over the desertification processes, particular reference is directed to the institutionalization of environmental education (EE) and its integration in the curricula of the Elementary Education system (six years of schooling) and the planned introduction of EE in the Secondary Education system. Such measures, together with others regarding training and public-awareness campaigns shall bring about desirable and profound changes in the long run.

Agriculture production activities is the object of a permanent monitoring mechanism that also functions as an early warning system fit to evaluate the effects of drought. The outcome of the annual evaluation is jointly validated by the Government, CILSS and the FAO. Said services play an important role in determining the status of food security in the country.

Since there is not any database on animal and plant species as well as on the components of the ecosystems and/or there is an insufficient coordination link between existing and scattered initiatives on the matter, efforts are being deployed to enable the introduction of an environment-based information system.

In order to advertise its name and achievements in the domain of environment, particularly the results of activities linked to the execution of the three environment-based Conventions, SEPA has acquired and runs a Website. So far, the results are encouraging.

Financial resources

The Budget is under increasing pressure. The execution of the components of the economic reforms programme is putting a great deal of pressure on the budget. Thus, elimination of the stock of domestic debt is part of a programme that continues to mobilize funds to capitalize the Trust Fund created for that effect, using proceeds from the privatization endeavours and from bilateral donors support. Despite success achieved so far with the execution of the Voluntary Departure programme, external funds are still needed to advance to its final stage.

Such fact is relevant in terms of assessing the capacity of the Government to adequately honour its commitments with respect to the joint funding of development projects. In addition, emergency measures and programmes (the result of a permanent drought spell) drain an ever increasing lump of financial resources from the annual investment programme.

Investment needs for the first three quinquennial NDP (natural resources and fight against desertification) were: (a) US$ 30 million; (b) US$ 44 million; and (c) US$ 54 million. Such a fact pictures an increased interest with respect to environmental matters. As for the IV NDP (1998-2000) such needs have been assessed at US$ 8.90 million.

Development agencies and/or financial institutions such as UNDP, FAO and the World Bank, as well as several other donor countries (on a bilateral basis) and the European Union, are providing a very important assistance in the execution of natural resources-based conservation projects ratified by the NDP.

Several environment-oriented funds are in the making including the Environment Fund. As concerns desertification, a National Fund to control desertification is awaiting publication in the Official Gazette. The main guideline from such schemes is to institute decentralized financial units that are managed through mechanisms that have been approved by all the interested parties.

Indicators

Although progress attained in the field of desertification control and mitigation of the effects of drought have been striking in several sectors, there is still a need to consolidate gains through their institutionalization and to strengthen the coordination of multisectoral activities in order to guarantee their sustainability.

The execution of the United Nations Convention on desertification control is backed by a UNSO/Luxembourg project that shares the same physical installation of SEPA. Said support project is pertinent and has started a process in which a certain number of institutional adjustments and a new approach to the problem of desertification and sustainable development in general, should be introduced.

On the other hand, it is striking the change of behaviour and sensitivity towards environmental problems on the part of citizens (namely those living in rural areas) the most likely outcome of environmental education activities and the actions of other relevant participants. The long run might be safeguarded this way.

CHAD

A sectoral consultation on the environment and desertification control was held in N'djamena on 21 and 22 November 1994, while the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification was adopted and signed on 17 June and on 14 and 15 October 1994 respectively. A happy coincidence and succession of events on a topical theme!

Two years later, the Constitution of the Republic of Chad was adopted by referendum. The country being prey to natural disasters, which scarred its citizens' memories of the years between 1968 and 1973 and of 1984 and 1985, when the balance between nature, man and beasts was badly affected and threatened, the Constitution explicitly devotes three articles, Nos. 47, 48 and 52, to the environment. Article 52 stipulates that "every citizen has a duty to respect and protect the environment". In terms of the Convention to Combat Desertification, this could be phrased as "every citizen has a duty to respect and protect the environment by combating desertification".

In August 1996, Chad became the fiftieth country to ratify the Convention. The immediate effect was to enable the Convention to enter into force. Sustainable development is now a realistic prospect, and the sectoral consultation on rural development to be held in June 1999 will have as a central objective "maintaining growth and strengthening capacity in the rural sector", with action to combat desertification becoming a main line of strategy in the management and exploitation of natural resources. Financing for such action accounts for $13 million of the resources programmed over the period 2000-2003.

The participation- and partner-based approach is the one that pervades the Convention. It has found fruitful ground in the new spirit of freedom that has come into being within Chad since structural reform began in 1994. The aim of the reform is to enable the rural population and the private sector to assume the role of fully-fledged partners. As regards the participatory restructuring of the rural economy, Order No. 025/PR/92 establishes the framework within which groups and cooperatives are being promoted. Rural communities, as decentralized territorial collectives within the meaning of title XI of the Constitution, are required under article 210 to ensure the protection of the environment.

Such openness to participation and partnership between the State and the decentralized collectives formed the background to the national consciousness-raising, information and education campaign on the Convention to Combat Desertification. The campaign gave the general public an opportunity to realize that "the Earth is a perishable commodity" and that people must behave more rationally if the abundant rainfall, water supplies, vegetation and fauna of the "good old days" were to return and endure instead of being things of the past.

Having been active in helping to draft the Convention, Chad intends to be no less effective in applying it, leaving the general public to take the lead in assuming the responsibility of becoming directly involved in systems for the sustainable production and exploitation of natural resources.

The Senior National Committee for the Environment (HCNE) is expected to ensure consistency among policies and strategies nationwide so that the Coordinating Bureau for Action to Combat Desertification can orchestrate the implementation of the Convention in a participation- and partnership-based setting enabling each of the parties concerned, subject to its capabilities, to do its appointed bit.

The National Programme of Action (NPA) to be drawn up must take account of the characteristic local and regional features of the country's three main biological and climatic zones - the Saharan, the Sahelian and the Sudanese. It will also make allowance for the need for harmony and consistency with the action strategies of the two complementary conventions, on biodiversity and climate change.

The Programme should also remedy the current dearth of benchmarks and performance indicators so that progress, both nationally and locally, can be assessed. It should serve as an inducement to seek a dynamic response from the public in the various parts of the country, while "observatories" will have to be strengthened so as to gather experience and data. The "observatories" will also direct the management and rational use of natural resources, making of the campaign against desertification a springboard for sustainable development among those concerned, i.e. the public at large.

The various steps taken to bring about this qualitative change can succeed only with the support and kindness of Chad's constant partners in its development efforts.

COTE D'IVOIRE

Desertification is, above all, a process of land degradation, mainly associated with human activity. The substantial decline in precipitation in Côte d'Ivoire since the late 1960s and the far-reaching changes in natural surroundings brought about by man-made and demographic pressure raise questions as to the future of the systems that ensure the regeneration of natural resources.

Thus land development is viewed today in terms of sustainable management and efforts to combat degradation of the soil. Increasingly aware of the seriousness of the problems facing it, Côte d'Ivoire has over the past few decades been developing action programmes that make allowance for the new biological, climatic and environmental constraints, as its ratification on 4 March 1997 of the Convention to Combat Desertification and all other conventions on the protection of the environment testifies.

The aim of this report is to outline the action being taken by the Ivorian community to combat desertification and the effects of drought.

The report discusses the causes and symptoms of desertification in Côte d'Ivoire, its impact on productive activities, how coordination of the Convention has changed, and the priority areas for intervention to combat desertification. The situation in each area is briefly analysed: the institutional and legal framework, strategies for resource development, the roles played by those principally involved, and the development of priority avenues of intervention and programmes of activity.

DJIBOUTI

The United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification and alleviate the effects of drought was adopted in Paris on 17 June 1994 and entered into force on 26 December 1996. The Republic of Djibouti signed it in 1994 and

ratified it on 1 June 1997. This report concerns the implementation of that Convention, specifically the state of progress in Djibouti. It will be submitted to the third Conference of the Parties scheduled for November 1999.

It is the fruit of preparatory work by a national consultant made available by CCD through IGAD (April 1999), amendments and corrections arising out of a national workshop held in Djibouti on 11 May 1999, and finalization by a smaller group of representatives of the partners working on the National Programme of Action (NPA). It chiefly emphasizes the policy measures and nstitutional growth needed to apply the Convention, stressing links to other action programmes in progress or in preparation that have a bearing on desertification control.

In reference to the sustainable development strategies and programmes embarked on before the Convention was signed, mention should be made of a number of strategic lines being followed with due regard to their possible impact on the natural environment, which thus converge upon the current focus of the Convention: among them, action to combat poverty, reducing the country's food dependence and reducing its energy dependence.

Widespread ignorance of natural resources and the mechanisms that control change in the natural surroundings in Djibouti, however, coupled with the country's low capacity for managing public goods and services economically and financially, has resulted in degradation of the rural environment, and economic and social development efforts over the period from 1977 (when the country became independent) to 1989 were largely ineffective. The situation has since been exacerbated by the armed conflict between 1991 and 1994 and the drying up of external financial resources.

Despite the unforeseen political events, over the period from 1990 to 2000, corresponding to the signature of the Convention, a new law on the thrust of economic and social policy has reaffirmed the strategic lines mentioned above and added others, some of them relating to desertification control:

- More intensive and diversified development of rural areas;
- Environmental protection and desertification control;
- Integration of women and young people into the economic and social development process;
- Promotion of the tertiary sector.

Owing to the civil war between 1991 and 1994, the objectives of the second law on economic and social policy and the 1991-1995 five-year plan were not attained. Hence most of the activities that were planned but not carried out, together with new priorities following on from the internal conflict (rehabilitation, social reintegration, institutional, structural and financial reform), now appear as strategies and priorities in national plans and policies for sustainable development.

The sectors affected by strategies and priorities in desertification control and alleviation of the effects of drought are small-scale fisheries, animal husbandry, oasis farming, the development of water engineering, environmental education and the integration of women and children into the economic and social development process and, lastly, scientific research into desertification control and drought mitigation.

Apart from the sectoral programmes referred to above, the action plans and programmes with implications for desertification control are the following:

- The national environmental action plan (NAEP): now being finalized;
- The national programme of action to combat desertification (NPA): under development;
- The special food security programme (SFSP), for which some financing has been arranged;
- A qualitative and quantitative reconnaissance programme on the main deep-lying and inferred-flow aquifers in the country's chief hydrographic networks;
- A rural water-point installation programme in the Obock district, under the IGAD-USAID Horn of Africa Support Project (HASP): submitted to IGAD;
- The IGAD-EU regional livestock development programme for East Africa (RELIDEPEA);
- The European Union's Panafrican Control of Epizooties (PACE) programme, which covers 35 African countries;
- The national rehabilitation programme;
- The structural adjustment programme.

All these plans and programmes seek sustainable development and rely on participation by non-governmental organizations, socio-professional associations and the sectors of the general public concerned.

The institutional measures taken in Djibouti to give effect to the Convention, including the drafting of the National Programme of Action (NPA), are in the main those previously adopted pursuant to another, wider-ranging programme, the National Environmental Action Programme (NEAP) of which NPA is one component. The most important among them are concerned with the establishment of the coordinating structures necessary to put NPA into action. From the NEAP steering body - the National Committee for the Environment (and the Technical Committee on the Environment) - the National NPA Steering Committee (NSC) oversees the work of the regional NPA committees, which themselves have close links to the grass-roots communities.

NSC is the national NPA coordinating body. It is serviced by the Agriculture and Forests Service (Ministry of Farming, Animal Husbandry and the Sea). It brings together public and private technical institutions, non-governmental organizations and associations active in desertification control, and Djibouti's development partners. Its main tasks are to outline broad policy, strategies and priorities in desertification control, to steer and coordinate related NPA and other activities, to identify desertification control projects and programmes in a participatory process, and to approve schedules for programme execution. It has at its disposal chiefly human resources, supplied in the main by its member institutions, more occasionally coming from outside. Financially speaking, it has virtually no resources of its own, making its task sometimes very difficult. At the subregional level, IGAD is still its main partner in the application of the Convention to Combat Desertification.

To this day NSC has no information system capacity or access to the Internet, no Website or information network (internal or external). Created in April 1998 and endorsed by Presidential decree on 6 May 1999, it has had neither the time nor the means to develop its own databases, and possesses nothing more than a few monographs produced during the preparations for NPA. The many databases on desertification control that exist are scattered among the main institutions responsible for natural resource management, among them the Ministry of Farming, Animal Husbandry and the Sea's technical services, the Higher Institute of Scientific Research (Institut Supérieur d'Etudes et de Recherches Scientifiques et Technique - ISERST), the Ministry of Habitat, Urban Development, Environment and Land Development (Environment Department), CRIPEN and the National Weather Service. There are plans, however, to allow the information to circulate locally and facilitate access to it.

Steps to adapt and strengthen the institutional framework and the machinery for coordinating and harmonizing action to combat desertification and alleviate the effects of drought are the same for NPA as for NEAP, given the organic relationship between the two. NPA is an essential component of NEAP, and meshes perfectly with the broad outlines of the latter. It is concerned to avoid duplication of effort and promote synergies among the various strategic levels of common interest; it draws upon the experience gained during preparations for NEAP and in the course of the projects and programmes of action to combat desertification that preceded it.

As with all the conventions that stemmed from the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development held in Rio de Janeiro, the public communication and consciousness-raising strategy adopted is to apply the participatory process. The main courses chosen for this purpose are:

- National and regional (district) seminars and workshops on collective efforts and restitution;

- Media coverage of problems and the action taken;

- Field trips;

- Supplementary studies on desertification and pilot demonstration studies of action to combat desertification conducted by non-governmental organizations and socio-professional associations, with the findings being published;

- Production of a summary report on desertification in Djibouti;

- Participatory formulation of the National Programme of Action;

- Production of a report (this one) on implementation of the Convention to Combat Desertification;

- Organization of a national gathering to approve and adopt NEAP and NPA.

The messages put across are concerned with desertification-related topics, desertification control and subjects that might influence it in some way, due regard being had to overall objectives and lines of strategy in the international, regional, subregional, national and local contexts.

Given that Djibouti has had recourse to a structural and financial adjustment programme, the background to the consultative process underlying the formulation and application of NPA and the partnership agreement with the developed countries and other interested parties is that the bulk of the programme planning and implementation work depends on the securing of financial partnership agreements between external donors, the Government, social and professional bodies, non-governmental organizations and local communities.

As regards the backstopping of NPA formulation and execution, roles and tasks have been apportioned among the partners as follows:

- UNSO/UNDP provides technical and financial support for the preparation of NPA and takes part in the consultative process;

- The State, which is responsible for NPA formulation and execution, is chiefly responsible for providing the necessary institutional, organizational and legal environment;

- The socio-professional bodies, national non-governmental organizations and grass-roots communities play a preponderant role in the preparations for and execution of the Programme, the consultations and collective efforts, and in carrying out and managing activities under the Programme.

Shortcomings have come to light in the consultative process: the regional environmental committees were not adequately prepared, and scheduled collective efforts and consultations have not always come to pass; and the socio-professional associations and local non-governmental organizations, mostly new and inexperienced, are not all capable of following a participatory approach.

In consequence, not all the priorities set have been entirely accomplished.

Action taken or planned under NPA is the result of an exhaustive and objective diagnostic exercise focusing on past experience in combating desertification:

(1) NPA draws on the cumulative basic data on natural resources (water, soil and vegetation).

(2) It draws on data from the studies carried out under one-off development and desertification control projects.

(3) It embraced all the activities undertaken in preparation for NEAP or relating to desertification control, including demonstration projects, institutional, organizational and consultative measures.

The demonstration projects selected for NEAP cover three main areas:

- Water management and economy;

- Desertification control;

- Improved living standards in urban areas.

The diagnostic exercise revealed where things stood at the beginning of the NPA process, and suggested what had to be done under the NPA programme itself.

Moves to improve the economic climate so as to create a setting conducive to economic and social development seek, first and foremost, to restore political stability. The main preparatory steps were the reconciliation between the armed movement (FRUD) and the Government on 24 December 1994, and institutional and legal reform (adoption of the Constitution, pluralism etc.).

Then comes the introduction of a structural adjustment programme. On the strength of its performance during the first phase of the programme, Djibouti is now qualified to move on to the next phase ("Programme of enhanced structural adjustment facility (ESAF)-supported reform").

Lastly, NPA meshes with the reform programme and the economic and social development plan to form the third raft of measures taken to improve the economic climate.

The main components of the reform plan are:

- Consolidation of macro-economic equilibrium;

- Continuing institutional reform;

- Economic restructuring and sectoral reforms;

- Action to combat poverty and a social-security safety net.

Desertification control and drought alleviation, with which the Convention to Combat Desertification is concerned, feature under the latter component and enjoy pride of place in the economic and social development plan.

Programmes and projects under the three-year enhanced structural adjustment reform plan that have a bearing on NPA relate to the advancement of women, the establishment of a social development fund, public works, social development, and the reintegration into society of demobilized soldiers (rehabilitation programme).

The national budget has not yet allocated any financial resources for the application of the Convention to Combat Desertification as NPA has still to be adopted by the Government. Resources will probably be appropriated under the special year 2000 budget. Preparations are being made to set up a national fund for environmental protection, including desertification control and drought and other natural disaster alleviation, and the various entities concerned are expected to participate at the local level; collective bodies (socio-professional associations and non-governmental organizations) and community structures are sufficient alert to the problem to have made their active involvement in the application of the Convention and management of sustainable development, in all forms and at all levels, a must. The non-governmental organizations and associations contacted while this report was being prepared are, without exception, ready to play their part in all desertification control activities and to set up special funds for that purpose.

As regards the measurement of progress in desertification control, the establishment of a general mechanism for monitoring and appropriate follow-up would require physical, technological and structural resources and human skills which Djibouti has not yet been able to mobilize.

At present, no sectoral department with responsibility for information about the environment, including desertification and action to combat it, can claim to be playing its role to the full. The available arrangements and limited, often non-functional, resources are scattered among various services, making exploitation of the data potentially available very difficult.

Given this situation, the National Environmental Action Programme (NEAP) calls for the introduction of an environmental information system to supply the deficiencies in information (centralization and dissemination) within the National Environmental Observatory.

Identifying appropriate indicators and putting in place the physical and human resources to measure them regularly is now a priority objective, which Djibouti will be unable to attain, however, without outside support.

EGYPT

Introduction

Egypt played an active role in the formulation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) which was concluded in Paris in June 1994. The Convention has come into force in December 1996 since the required number of countries completed the ratification process; Egypt stands number four at the top of the list. Parties to the Convention have to meet their commitments, foremost of which is the preparation of a National Action Programme (NAP) to combat desertification. The main objective of NAP is to identify factors contributing to desertification, and the appropriate measures to combat it.

Definition of the problem

Egypt extends over one million square kilometres in the north-eastern corner of Africa with an extension into Asia. The climate is hot and dry in summer and warm with occasional rainfall in winter. The northern region of the country, being bounded by the Mediterranean Sea, enjoys more moderate climatic conditions.

The major water resource of the country comes from the River Nile, which sustains an irrigated agricultural system in the Nile Valley and the Delta. At present, the river provides Egypt with 55.5 billion cubic metres of water every year, 85 per cent of which is used by the agricultural sector. Water is the limiting factor in the production system, and more lands can be cultivated provided that more water resources are made available, or a greater portion of the available water is recycled for irrigation.

Rain-fed agriculture is common on a narrow strip along the Mediterranean coast. Many schemes of water harvesting are constructed by local inhabitants to grow crops, mostly barley, wheat, figs and olives. A rangeland area is located farther south of the Mediterranean strip, and another area is located in Sinai and along the foothills of the Red Sea mountains. Moreover, oases in the Western Desert are inhabited by small communities, and underground water is used to irrigate land in a low-input production system. Socio-economic factor limit utilization of the existing resources to their full potential capacity.

The Egyptian population now stands at 62 million, living mostly in the Nile Valley and the Delta. The high population density has placed the lands resources under serious pressure. Most lands are over-exploited, with short periods of fallow, and high doses of fertilizers are added. In some places where subsurface drainage facilities are absent or inefficient, water logging and the concomitant salinity and sodicity are degrading the lands.

Components of the Egyptian NAP

The Egyptian Environmental Affairs Agency (EEAA) is the National Coordinating Body (NCB) of the UNCCD. Within the organizational structure of EEAA, a National Coordinating Committee (NCC) was established and a Focal Point (FP) was identified.

The NCC is chaired by the Chief Executive Officer of EEAA and membership includes representatives from relevant Ministries, the People's Assembly, experts, the private sector, cooperatives, and NGOs.

The NCC adopted a rational agenda to formulate the National Action Programme of Egypt. First, it was decided to proceed simultaneously on several tracks. Awareness of desertification and the UNCCD by stakeholders has been emphasized by organizing meetings, workshops, and through the media. Second, defining problems and potentials, and as such, completed projects were assessed to learn from gained experience. Third, the multisectoral aspects of desertification and its control were stressed especially those pertaining to the socio-economic aspects. Fourth, it was realized that the Egyptian NAP may best be initiated by establishing interconnections between current relevant projects undertaken by individual sectors. Thereafter, as the process develops in the future, forthcoming projects would be more institutionally oriented toward the real multi-faceted spirit of the UNCCD.

This report is being submitted to meet an Egyptian obligation to the UNCCD. It begins by outlining the environmental aspects of resource management, and then reviews the magnitude of resources and the strategic considerations for their utilization. The recent structural rearrangement of the national economic policies and the open market economy are relevant issues. The report cites examples of completed, current, and forthcoming projects concerned with combating desertification, then the report concludes by an outline on indicators.

The projects of this report were selected to reflect the wide range of Egyptian efforts to combat desertification within the context of sustainable development. The examples given cover all types of land use: irrigated and rain-fed agriculture as well as rangelands. The examples also reflect work undertaken and/or planned to improve the physical environment and improve the institutional capacity of relevant stakeholders. Moreover, they represent both of work done and/or to be done on the local scale and work of regional and far-reaching consequences.

ERITREA

1. The strategies and priorities established within the framework of sustainable development plans and/or policies

Great effort has been exerted to conduct the NAP preparation within the framework of the existing environmental policies, strategies, and plans currently available in the country. It has been encouraging to learn the existence of many enabling legislation, strategies, policies, and plans that directly relate and support the implementation of UNCCD. Prominent among the sustainable development policies and plans are the constitution, the macro-economic policy, the national biodiversity and action plan, the national economic policy framework and programme for 1998-2000, forestry, animal resource, energy, water resources, private sector, resettlement and environment strategies. The National Environment Management Plan (NEMP-E) of 1995 has been an extremely valuable document providing a wealth of facts

for the preparation of the NAP. It clearly exposes the strategy, the plans, and the programme envisioned by the Government to come up with the most appropriate national management of the environment.

2. The institutional measures taken to implement the Convention

The NCB aims at creating a sustainable resource use and economic development although it is aware of other organizations' roles in planning and implementing economic development programmes. It is to play an active catalytic part that provides guidance and wisdom to those organizations that are directly involved in environment management.

Almost all line Ministries, public, mass, and private organizations have plans and programmes that affect the environment. The most pressing issue is the establishment of harmonious interrelationships that could be achieved if all concerned are able to gauge the interdependency between their individual actions.

The National Coordination Body (NCB) is rising up to meet the challenges of creating a conducive situation where all the concerned will integrate and harmonize their plans and operations. Following the ratification of the UNCCD in August 1996, the Office of the President had nominated the Ministry of Agriculture as NCB for UNCCD. Soon the minister of agriculture empowered the Department of Land Resources and Crop Production to spearhead the NCB by placing all the expertise resources of the Department in particular and MoA's in general at its disposal. The Director-General of the Department has been appointed as the National Focal Point of the UNCCD and has established an office specifically responsible for the CCD activities. A NAP coordinator with a background in natural resources management has been employed to coordinate the implementation of CCD.

Aided by a 15-member technical committee from the most related Government, private, public, and mass organizations, participation of the local communities, and the NAP Coordinator, the NCB is in the process of preparing the NAP document.

It is most encouraging to note the remarkable degree of cooperation demonstrated by the related organizations in providing information required for the preparation of NAP. National priority information has come forth from the line ministries, the chamber of commerce, mass organizations (local NGOs), and the communities. The means employed to collect all these data consist of interface communication, consultations, meetings and written texts.

The Technical Committee has played a major part in the collection, assessment of the write-up of issue papers, and review of draft papers of the NAP. It employs regular meetings under the chairmanship of the NFP. The committee has a work plan and avails itself of database resources from the country and abroad. Each member of the committee, being an expert and related to environment management in own respective organization, is acting as a veritable resource person in the combat against desertification.

3. **The participatory process in support of the preparation and implementation of the action programme**

The Government of Eritrea has taken several measures to transfer information and create awareness on desertification of the stakeholders through sensitization workshops, seminars and awareness campaigns with the active participation of the local governments, mass organizations and the Ministry of Education.

4. **The consultative process in support of the preparation and implementation of the NAP and the partnership agreement with developed country parties and other interested entities**

The NAP will be enriched by the inputs of the local communities through regional workshops to be held throughout the country to solicit the views of the people on how they perceive the factors that contribute to desertification, practical measures they envisage to address the issue and find out means on how to increase local participation and resource mobilization. Following that, a National Forum will be held with the active participation of all the stakeholders to enable them to identify priorities to combat desertification.

There have been consultations made between the involved organizations as described above, however, combat of desertification being a complex task, inputs have been sought and attained from diverse sources such as UNSO/UNDP, EU, DANIDA, SOS Sahel, World Vision International, Grass Root International, FAO, CSIRO, ICRAF, DFSC and NGOs. These have provided funds, expertise and guidance.

5. **The measures taken or planned within the framework of the NAP, including measures to improve the economic environment, to conserve natural resources, to improve the institutional organization, to improve knowledge on desertification and to monitor and assess the effects of drought**

Several measures taken by different sectors can be considered as significant factors for the enactment of NAP. Measures were taken to improve the economic environment, to conserve natural resources, to improve the institutional organization, to improve knowledge on desertification and to monitor and assess the effects of drought. The establishment of an early-warning system, introduction of integrated farming systems, and afforestation and soil and water conservation activities by the Ministry of Agriculture directly improve food security and environmental restoration. Similarly, the Department of Environment, Department of Water and the Department of Land have taken appropriate measures contributing to biodiversity conservation and development of information system, agroecological classification that can be regarded as noteworthy. The Water Resources and Energy Departments have also respectively taken steps to take stock of their priorities for action by introducing alternative energy sources.

All the relevant institutions have come up with their plans of action to ameliorate prevailing conditions and improve the policy and institutional

capacities for effective guidance and regulation. It is also useful to mention the positive role played by the private sector, the National Union of Eritrean Women, the National Union of Eritrean Youth and Students, and the Eritrean Confederation of Workers in promoting environmental programmes aimed at the combat of desertification.

The linkages achieved with subregional and regional action programmes have mainly focused on IGAD and the Committee on Science and Technology which has contributed to awareness creation and identification of appropriate action programmes.

6. Financial allocations from national budgets in support of implementation as well as financial assistance and technical cooperation received and needed, identifying and prioritizing requirements

In addition to national financial allocations provided to all the CCD-related activities described above, several projects are funded by various international organizations including UNSO/UNDP, UNCCD, IGAD, UNICEF, Heinrich Boll Foundation, World Bank, GEF, UNFPA, DANIDA, EU, SOS Sahel, FAO, NORAD, ADF and SIDA.

It should be noted that students and communities have accomplished extensive projects in afforestation and conservation activities.

7. A review of the benchmarks and indicators utilized to measure progress and an assessment thereof

Eritrea intends to assess the progress being made in combating desertification both through formal and informal means. The informal means include meetings, workshops and seminars, preparation reports of activities related to desertification, and yearly review mission. In addition, the Early Warning and Food Information System will provide information on the progress being made to achieve food security. The formal means will be to discuss and agree on a set of benchmarks or targets to be achieved in addressing desertification consisting of qualified and time bound targets. Another element of the NAP will be to establish indicators for the benchmarks or targets. The NAP process intends to systematize national and local reporting on measures taken to combat desertification. The format under consideration is based on analysis of measures and impacts achieved in the key areas of agriculture, energy, environment, land, major groups, and water in terms of improving the economic and social environment, improving natural resource conservation, improving institutional capacity, improving knowledge on desertification, improving the capacity to predict and mitigate drought, and improving local participation.

ETHIOPIA

This first national report examines the NAP process from various perspectives such as the degree of integration of the NAP in other social and economic policies and strategies, the extent of participation and consultation during the process, the institutional mechanisms being crafted for implementing the UNCCD and other relevant activities.

There were no plans or strategies explicitly targeting desertification in Ethiopia before the UNCCD although concern for soil erosion and loss of soil fertility in the last 25 years has resulted in numerous conservation programmes including rangeland and livestock management in the drylands. Past conservation programmes have failed because the approach had been top down. Besides unpopular policies which created disincentives for proper natural resources management, forced mobilization was used in the name of participation. Since the change of Government in 1991, administrative and political measures which encourage empowerment and participation of local communities as well as macro-policies which emphasize sustainable agriculture have been taken and international cooperation in the environmental field strengthened.

The most important macro-policies are the Agricultural Development Led Industrialization (ADLI), the Conservation Strategy of Ethiopia (CSE), the Regional Conservation Strategy (RCSs) and the Disaster Preparedness and Prevention Policy (DPPP). There are also numerous sector and cross-sector specific policies and strategies already in place. Many of them have come into existence after 1992. None of them discuss desertification. Policies that have important implications for combating desertification such as the Rural Land Use and Administration, Forestry, Water Resources, Wildlife as well as Soil and Water Conservation Policy are only in the draft stage.

The NAP, in its design, has taken into account its own integration into the process of national economic and social planning. It is adequately linked to existing framework sustainable development plans, sector and cross-sector specific policies and, particularly, the CSE. Realization of the complementarity between the NAP and other plans particularly the CSE has resulted in an approach to the NAP formulation which is not duplicative. The NAP specifically states that the policies and strategies as well as the action programmes contained in the CSE can serve the purposes of combating desertification and mitigating the effects of drought in as far as the major areas of natural resources are concerned. Where the NAP has found CSE policies and plans deficient, it has incorporated additional policies and strategies of a short, medium and long-term nature such as the major areas indicated in Article 10 of the Convention and Article 8 of the Regional Implementation Annex for Africa.

In addition, since some of the issues of desertification are treated generally in the sector and cross-sector specific policies, the necessary restatement and amplification had been made in the NAP. A comprehensive review of these policies in the future should ensure that such issues are integrated within the overall policies and strategies of the relevant sectors and cross-sectors.

Although the NAP contains additional policy and strategic directives designed to emphasize the special requirements of the Convention it is still considered as an action programme which should be used to attain the objectives of the CSE and other relevant policies and strategies. Formulation of the Ethiopian NAP has only been completed in November 1998. It is expected to be approved and officially adopted by the Government in the next few months.

As the Regional States start implementing their RCSs, the degree of integration of the NAP is expected to increase. One of the benefits expected from the CSE/RCS institutional mechanisms, when fully operational, is the creation of a conducive atmosphere for integrating the NAP and promoting bottom-up planning.

The EPA and the NSC established under it form the NCB.

EPA was established in 1995 by virtue of Proclamation 9 of 1995. It is the federal organ for coordinating and regulating environmental management and is accountable to the Council of Ministers. It reports regularly to parliament. It has broad mandates over environmental matters. The present EPA enabling legislation does not clearly specify the coordinative and integrative role that the Authority should play in policy, strategy and action plan formulation, implementation, assessment and review. However, the CSE entrusts such responsibilities to EPA. Action has already been taken, in the course of drafting an environmental framework legislation, to revise its enabling legislation to fully reflect what is expected of the Authority. In accordance with its mandate to carry out studies on desertification and create favourable conditions for their implementation, the Authority has established a "Desertification Studies and Control Team".

The EPA consists of the EPC and the General Manager's Office, an executive arm which serves as the secretariat to the EPC. It receives from the federal Government what is known as recurrent budget for covering personnel salaries and other running costs only. A NORAD assisted project which focuses on capacity building for the implementation of the CSE is being implemented under EPA. Since 1996 NORAD has granted for the current CSE Phase III Project a total of SFr 5,596,378.

The NSC is composed of representatives of EPA, other government organs, research and academic institutions as well as NGOs. The government bodies were selected simply on the basis of their relevance. The NGO members of the NSC were delegated to the NSC by a group of NGOs as well as designated to act as an ad hoc National NGO Coordinating Committee. There are only two women in the NSC. There is no representation of major groups such as farmers, pastoralists, youth, etc. Representation of such groups has been difficult to attain since there are none organized at that level. The frequency of NSC meetings has depended on the intensity of NAP activities. However, the NSC intends its future meetings to be regular.

The NSC is accountable to EPA. So far the responsibility of the NSC has been to coordinate the implementation of interim measures culminating in the formulation and finalization of the NAP carried out on the basis of work plans. The NSC has so far managed to spearhead the NAP formulation process on behalf of the Government and people of Ethiopia supported by funds provided for NAP preparation by UNDP/UNSO and the UNCCD secretariat and managed by EPA.

The present TOR of the NSC only reflects duties pertaining to the formulation of the NAP. Therefore, the future of this committee needs to be decided vis-à-vis the EPC. So far EPC's involvement in the NAP process has not been direct. The need to involve the EPC as early in the process as

possible is, however, recognized. In the meantime the NSC, with further strengthening as a multi-stakeholder body, will need a new set of TOR for the implementation phase of the NAP.

Neither the NSC and its individual members nor other institutions which collect, analyse and store relevant environmental data can be considered as having full fledged and effective databases. The NCB is in the process of establishing a desertification database for use by itself as well as others. The responsibility to undertake the formation of a NCST for Ethiopia has been given to the ESTC. In the meantime the NSC is participating in a worldwide survey and evaluation of existing relevant networks, institutions, agencies and bodies who might wish to become part of a global network of networks which will support the implementation of the NAP.

Besides the conducive decentralizing political and administrative changes introduced by the FDRE Governments, the more specific CSE mechanisms created for effective natural resources management are positive. The EPA is responsible for regulatory aspects. Coordination of CSE implementation at the federal level is the function of the EPA. The MEDaC coordinates the planning, programming and consolidating of the overall investment programmes and annual capital budgets with CSE action programmes forming an environmental subset of the overall development programme of the country. At the Regional States level RECCs, with either the planning or the agriculture bureaux acting as their secretariats, have been established. There is a plan to establish as soon as practicable, Zone, Woreda and Community Environmental Coordinating Committees (ZECC, WECC, CECC).

A capacity-building programme for the Regional Environmental Coordinating Committees (RECC) and their focal points has been going on since 1996. However, a lot remains to be done at the zonal, woreda and particularly the community levels before implementation of the NAP becomes effectively internalized. The NAP takes into account this need and, in the list of priority programmes therein, every programme area has its capacity-building component.

General communications efforts under the CSE (since 1996) and communications efforts which are more specific to UNCCD under the NAP process have also been carried out. These activities include organizing numerous workshops, translation of the convention into major local languages and reprinting and disseminating the information kit received from the UNCCD secretariat. Workshops were accompanied by supportive activities such as using the mass media, and distribution of leaflets, banners, posters, and T-shirts. A special workshop for media people was organized to get their support in the dissemination of information and sensitization of the people.

The NAP and various other sectoral and cross-sectoral action plans/programmes will be translated into projects for implementation. The bulk of these projects will be identified, designed and implemented at the grass-roots level. Line ministries and bureaux will implement components of the NAP and CSE/RCS policies and strategies for which they are responsible under the existing law.

Ethiopia has a number of traditional community-based organizations. Other non-traditional forms of CBOs are also emerging. The present decentralized and devolved system of governance has facilitated the emergence of indigenous NGOs. There are also a number of international regional and subregional organizations relevant for combating desertification in Ethiopia.

The NAP does not explicitly articulate subregional issues and their relationship to the national issues. However, certain activities that are currently under way or planned such as the establishment of a desertification database, are linked to subregional efforts and will contribute to the achievement of the SRAP objectives.

Since the NAP is finalized now the NCB should start initiatives designed to make the regional States play their important role of prompting and coordinating the implementation of activities and projects. The regions would like to have their own specific Action Programmes. As a result one of the programmes/activities foreseen as a priority in the NAP is undertaking such formulation.

Analysis of the existing legislation indicates that, although a number of positive measures were taken to improve and modernize the country's environmental laws, these efforts have not been systematic and comprehensive. Nevertheless, the analysis still indicates several positive trends which auger well for the future.

Ethiopia's Constitution is environmentally sensitive. Legislation in the areas of forestry, water resources utilization and mining has recently been updated. A very important new legislation is the new Federal Rural Land Administration Proclamation. Legislation in the wildlife area has been presented to the Council of Ministers, with a draft Wildlife Conservation Management and Utilization Proclamation and regulations. Most of these laws have, to a deferring degree, some provisions which attempt to enhance participation and empower local level communities not only to have a say in how they want the resources on which they depend to be managed but also to have the right to manage such resources.

The forestry and water resources legislation are not accompanied with implementation regulations. Since they will not be of much use without such implementational regulations, issuance of such regulations will have to be considered. In addition, the latter legislation focuses more on procedures for granting water use rights and hardly contains provisions to eliminate or minimize the adverse effects on water resources by other activities or the adverse effects of water resources on other resources including land. The draft wildlife legislation focuses too much on restrictions and prohibitions. It hardly contains provisions reflecting recent trends in the conservation and sustainable utilization of wildlife such as allowing reasonable access to wildlife resources, participation in the designation and management of protected areas, as well as benefit sharing.

There are also areas of natural resources management that are not covered at all or not sufficiently covered by legislation. A major one of

relevance for combating desertification is soil conservation. Legislation on EIA is also not in existence at present although EPA is preparing draft procedures and guidelines.

An extensive review and analysis of environmental legislation has been carried out in 1997 to identify the weaknesses, the gaps and overlaps in the area as well as to make recommendations for reform through the modification of existing legislation and the enactment of new ones. The EPA intends to undertake the reform of legislation once the environmental framework legislation is approved and enacted into law by parliament.

Genuine participation is recognized as indispensable for natural resources, including combating desertification and mitigating the effects of drought. A precondition for genuine participation is acquisition of power by communities to make their own decisions on matters that affect their lives and environment. The development of the CSE and the RCSs has been, relatively speaking, very participatory for a country which, when the process of the CSE started, was still under a centralist and commandist regime. The participation was at various levels, i.e. local, woreda, zonal, regional and federal. A sound partnership has been sought between planners, decision-makers and the Ethiopian people to manage the country's natural resources for the benefit of present and future generations of Ethiopians. The CSE integrates the important approaches contained in the Convention.

Efforts have also been made to make the NAP process as participatory as possible. Four workshops at the regional level and four workshops at the federal level have been organized. NGOs, donors, regional State representatives, etc., participated in the workshops. A workshop on the role of NGOs/CBOs has also been organized with the objective of raising their awareness about the Convention and provide a forum for exchange of NGO/CBO experience as well as ensuring the implementation of the Convention with their participation. The workshop came up with terms of reference for an NGO/CBO Coordinating Body as well as a provisional action plan for a five person NGO representative ad hoc committee. The first National Forum meeting, which took place from 17-19 November 1998, was a milestone in terms of enabling the participation of important stakeholders, from grass-roots communities, NGOs, Regional State representatives, Federal Government organs, donors and international organizations.

In general most institutional categories have benefited from these awareness efforts since the means of reaching the various sectors of society have been as diverse as possible. Awareness creation and increased participation of local populations is something that must be intensified as the implementation of the NAP commences at the grass-roots level.

Adequate diagnosis of land degradation and its root causes has been made within the CSE process. The NCB, besides having a background document on drought and desertification prepared, has ensured that past experiences and efforts to manage the drylands were reviewed. However, these efforts are not considered adequate.

Planning and implementation of natural resources management activities today have radically changed. Great progress has been made by development

agents at local levels. NGOs have also been quick to apply participatory and empowering approaches. Planning together with local communities is becoming a common feature of local level development although the rate of progress is variable. Integrating relevant ongoing projects is not much of a problem since the CSE provides the institutional framework within which such projects will be coordinated. The NAP has a list of prioritized programmes and projects which, when implemented in adequate numbers, are likely to bring about positive changes.

In spite of the focused capacity-building efforts of the SCSE as well as the general capacity-building efforts of other Government and non-governmental institutions, local level actors have not yet been reached adequately. Therefore, direct efforts should be made under the NAP process to reach the local level. In order for Regional Focal Points to move forward, the NCB should take the initiative of gathering them for a meeting to discuss and come up with recommendations, including recommendations regarding financial and technical assistance as well as capacity-building measures, that need to be made available from external sources through the NCB.

The effort to involve international partners in the NAP formulation process cannot be said to have been persistent. The UNDP field office in Ethiopia coordinates donors for the NAP process. Several meetings with donors were arranged by UNDP so that they can be sensitized and become participants, be briefed about the measures so far taken, the plans into the future and the roles that they can play, particularly in providing financial resources. During the initial meetings donor representatives hardly knew anything about the Convention. This situation gradually changed. These meetings have not resulted in immediate availability of funds for the NAP formulation. They may have, however, moved the donors to start thinking about how they are going to meet their convention obligations of providing assistance as the process gathers momentum and actual implementation commences. All activities leading the completion of the NAP formulation have only been made possible with funds acquired from UNDP/UNSO and the UNCCD secretariat and the provision of technical assistance by IGAD in terms of consultants. So far Ethiopia has received US$ 365,000 for the process leading to the NAP preparation.

Although the Government makes allocations for environmental protection, most of it to combat land degradation, efforts to mobilize funds at the international level have not really been made to date since the NAP was not finalized. Mobilization of funds, be it nationally or internationally, requires either an established NDF into which funds not earmarked for any particular project can be deposited or a list of projects established pursuant to the NAP. Although the drafting of a legal instrument for the establishment of a NDF is almost complete, it should be noted that it is not the only mechanism. Assistance from multilateral and bilateral sources will need to be emphasized.

At present there is no mechanism to enable observation and monitoring of progress in implementing the NAP. However, the CSE and RCSs state that monitoring and assessment, both at projects level and, more importantly, at policy and strategic levels, should be carried out. Indicators which will help in monitoring and assessing the CSE are currently being developed. While these indicators encompass the wider environment there is also a monitoring

and assessment system for the NAP process which has been proposed by a study commissioned by the UNCCD secretariat. It is hoped that the later proposal will easily be integrated with the current CSE initiative.

GAMBIA

The United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in those countries experiencing serious drought and/or desertification provides a legal framework for cooperation among development partners. The Gambia signed the Convention in June 1994 and later ratified it in January 1996.

While desertification concerns in the Gambia were precipitated by the 1972/73 major Sahelian drought, concerted public policy actions to deal with the scourge commenced with the proclamation of the Banjul Declaration in 1977. This Declaration spun off a series of natural resources and environmental legislative and institutional developments culminating in the creation of a separate technical ministry (Department of State) for natural resources and the environment in 1981 with appropriate technical departments/unit for forestry, fisheries, water and the environment.

In the ensuing decade to these policy, institutional and legal developments, the Government employed a series of strategies to deal with the persistent drought conditions. These strategies can be broadly grouped as community participation in resource management, institutional strengthening, research and development, extension and education and, direct public investment programmes and projects.

These early efforts at combating the threats of desertification nothwithstanding environmental degradation continued at an accelerated rate as a consequence of macroeconomic policy failures, including natural resource management policies.

The Government adopted an Economic Recovery Programme (ERP) in 1985 followed by a Programme for Sustained Development in 1990 in a bid to arrest the escalating economic deterioration and place the economy on a sustainable growth path. To address the underlying causes of environmental degradation, it enacted a National Environmental Management Act (NEMA) in 1987 and later formulated and adopted a Gambia Environmental Action Plan (GEAP) in 1992. These post-ERP developments circumscribed the legal and institutional frameworks for environmental and natural resource management, policy formulation, decision-making, implementation and coordination as well as the implementation of the natural resource-related international Conventions on Biological Diversity (CBD), Climate Change (FCCC) and Desertification (CCD). The NEMA established the National Environmental Management Council (NEMC) and the National Environment Agency (NEA). The NEA constituted a number of sectoral Working Groups including the Agriculture and Natural Resources (ANR) Working Group in 1994 to facilitate its sectoral coordinating role.

The GEAP registered visible impact in arresting environmental degradation but failed to remedy the underlying structural inadequacies and weaknesses of the economy. In response to these deficiencies, the Government formulated and articulated The Gambia Incorporated - Vision 2020 in 1996 with well-defined macroeconomic policy objectives to stimulate accelerated growth.

Following the signing of the CCD in 1994, the Government designated the Forestry Department as the focal point for its implementation and established a Desertification Task Force as a subcommittee of the ANR Working Group to initiate the process. The Government also identified the Federal Republic of Germany as the lead country to serve as facilitator for the elaboration of the National Action Plan (NAD) in the Gambia within the GEAP institutional framework. The Desertification Task Force created a Core Group of the Force made up of NEA, Forestry Department and GTZ representatives in the country to facilitate the NAD elaboration process at the national level. At the local level, the Task Force works through the Divisional Coordinating Committees (DCC). Within any one division, the respective DCC and the Task Force worked together to organize meetings at the district and divisional levels.

The ANR Working Group initiated a participatory process for the elaboration of the NAD together with the plans for the CBD, UNFCC and Local Environmental Action Plans (LEAPs). Through capacity 21, the UNDP funded a three-day capacity-building training workshop in each division to enhance the capacity of the communities in particular, to effectively participate in the NAD process. Farmers undertook two study tours to enrich their appreciation of desertification. These initial events were followed by a national forum attended by representatives of grass-roots communities, local authorities, NGOs, donor community, diplomatic corps, special interest groups such as women and youth, the private sector and government agencies. The proceedings of the workshop were organized at plenary and working group levels.

Consultations on the Convention were held at three levels through a bottom-up approach - the grass-roots zonal level, divisional level and the national level. The consultation aimed at sensitizing the general public, getting the views of local communities and involving the people in the strategy planning exercise of the CCD. Based on the differences in forest and vegetation cover, the country was divided into 16 zones and a team of resource persons conducted the consultation process.

The Government ratified the UNCCD in January 1996. To implement its commitment to this convention and all other allied conventions and, to operationalize its agriculture and natural resources sector policy proposals of Vision 2020, the Government conducted a sector review with the assistance of UNDP and FAO. The review resulted in the development of subsectoral policy objectives and strategies within which specific desertification concerns will be addressed. Similarly the ongoing National Action Programme planning process has identified key institutional and local government reform arrangements, agriculture and natural resources sector concerns, population and poverty and, desertification and poverty issues for inclusion in the NAP.

The NAP will be monitored within the framework of the GEAP. The monitoring strategy is designed to enhance routine progress review; environmental management; development of subsequent phases of the GEAP; the state of the Environment Report; coordination efforts of key actors, roles and responsibilities for data collection; and, periodic evaluations.

The process of the elaboration of the NAP has so far received a fair amount of international assistance. The GTZ and UNSO funded the first national forum through UNDP. The UNDP supported the grass-roots consultations

as well as the local capacity-building training, educational tours for farmers and direct support to the focal point through capacity 21. Other sources of funding for the major public agencies active in desertification-related activities are the national budgets and Dedicated Funds, mainly the Fisheries Development and the National Forestry Funds. There are plans to create a dedicated fund for Biodiversity and Desertification within the framework of the strategy to create new sources of funding.

Annex 1 of the complete report summarizes the indicators and benchmarks to be utilized to measure the progress of implementation of the NAP with respect to forestry, soil conservation, wildlife management, livestock management, water resources management, energy and, agricultural production and marketing. The indicators are grouped under physical, process and process result indicators.

GHANA

Ghana is located in south-central Western Africa, south of the Sahara and north of the Equator on the Gulf of Guinea. It is bounded on the north and north-west by Burkina Faso, on the west by Côte d'Ivoire, and on the east by Togo, and on the south by the Atlantic Ocean.

With an area of 237,537 square kilometres the country presently has a population of about 17.5 million, of which about 20-50 per cent live in the relatively dry areas which are subject to moderate to high levels of desertification. These dry areas are found mostly in the Northern and Upper Regions and also in the coastal savanna. Overall, approximately 30-40 per cent of the total land area of Ghana is subject to desertification.

It must also be pointed out that with the current trend in forest destruction in the forest belt through farming, logging, mining, charcoal burning and firewood fetching, the area could face the wrath of desertification if remedial measures are not put in place. In the savanna zone (covering about 15.6 million hectares), as much as 14.7 million hectares are unreserved and are being destroyed at an estimated rate of 20,000 hectares per annum.

Such is the scenario of land degradation in Ghana that has made the desertification threat to assume national proportions. Indeed, although development and environmental issues are inextricably linked, the quest for economic growth has, for a long time, overshadowed environmental concerns. Consequently, the process of development has often left in its trail, deterioration of productive lands, deforestation, desertification, air and water pollution.

The need to redirect Ghana's development efforts into a sustainable development process and sound environmental management was recognized early in 1973 with the creation of the Environmental Protection Council (which was transformed into an Environmental Protection Agency in 1994) to focus on the integration between development and the environment.

This process was given an added impetus in 1998 when the Government of Ghana initiated a major effort to put the essence of the intricate

relationship between the environment and development on the priority agenda through the preparation of an Environmental Action Plan for Ghana which was adopted in 1991.

Changes at the international level towards promoting sound development and environmental sustainability have also been significant in propelling national efforts. As a follow up to the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment (Stockholm, 1972), the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) was organized in 1992 to produce, among other things, an Earth Charter embodying basic principles regarding general behaviour towards the environment for bringing about sustainable development and an Agenda for Action for dealing with major environmental issues in the socio-economic development process - "Agenda 21".

One of the major offshoots of the Earth Summit (UNCED) was not only the bringing into being of the Conventions on Climate Change and Biological Diversity, but also the setting of the stage for the negotiation of an International Convention to Combat Desertification, which was adopted in June 1994, and finally came into force in December 1996.

Article 26 of the Convention to Combat Desertification requires that each Party shall communicate to the Conference of Parties at its ordinary sessions, through the secretariat, reports on measures which it has taken for the implementation of the Convention. This report to the First Session of the Conference to the Parties has been prepared in response to this requirement.

In the main, the report sets out the strategies and priorities established within the framework of sustainable development plans and policies embodied in the National Environmental Action Plan, the institutional measures taken to implement the Convention, proposed partnerships and some measures taken to conserve natural resources and to improve knowledge of desertification.

GUINEA

A. Introduction

The United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification adopted in Paris in June 1994 is an expression of global solidarity in the face of a world-wide problem affecting nearly a billion people on the planet. It gives drought- and desertification- affected countries an opportunity to mount or pursue a counter-offensive in an atmosphere of partnership and growing public responsibility.

The Republic of Guinea ratified the Convention on 28 January 1997. As a signatory country, it undertook a number of obligations, one of the most important being the preparation of a National Programme of Action to combat desertification. With a view to the third session of the Conference of the Parties (CCD/COP3), scheduled to take place in November next in Recife, Brazil, each signatory State was asked to produce a national report on its application of the Convention.

The principal aim of the national report is to furnish concise, comparable information on progress in the application of the Convention; for this purpose, information on political measures and institutional development is of the highest importance.

Preparation of the report began with the tailoring of the methodological outline proposed by the CCD secretariat to Guinean conditions. This was followed by visits from several central administration technical services, research and development institutions and national sections from the ministerial departments represented on the 13-strong National Coordinating Committee for the application of the Convention, which also includes one national non-governmental organization, and a number of resource persons.

Initially it was found necessary to launch a debate on the problems of desertification in Guinea because public perceptions strongly influence the Convention application process. The fact that large parts of Guinea are lucky enough to receive relatively generous rainfall and serve as the water-tower for the West African region, to boast several handsome forests, a mountain range of great hydrological significance and substantial biological diversity, is no reason for complacency. Thought must also be given to how those resources are evolving.

B. Strategies and priorities set in sustainable development plans and policies

A wide range of sectoral strategies have been adopted in Guinea to bring about efficient improvements in environmental and natural-resource management. For this report, however, we have tried to single out those with a significant impact on natural resources management and close links to desertification control. Chief among these are:

- the National Forestry Plan of Action (PAFN)
- the Mangrove Development Scheme (SDAM)
- the Farm Development Policy Letter (LPDA)
- the Energy Sector Study Programme (ESMAP)
- the National Environmental Action Plan (PNAE)
- the National Sustainable Human Development Programme (PNDH)
- the Framework Programme for the Promotion of Decentralization (PC/PDRSOC)
- the Framework Programme for Grass-Roots Initiative Support (PACAIB).

PAFN was drawn up in 1989; its main objective is to produce a strategy for the overall development of the forestry sector over the long term.

SDAM has mapped out the entire management strategy for the mangrove ecosystem that extends along almost 300 km of coastline and supports nearly two million inhabitants: peasants, fishermen, forest workers, all the middlemen in the rice, fish and wood distribution networks, and lastly the consumers, rural or urban.

Launched in December 1991, LPDA 1 set out the priority areas in farm policy in the light of the general policy guidelines given in the Head of State's programme statement of 22 December 1985.

The areas it identified as of high priority in the farming sector were the promotion of food security, the revival of export crops and the preservation of the productive base through improved management of natural resources. Given macro-economic constraints and the experience acquired during the application of LPDA 1, LPDA 2, adopted in 1998, concentrates on nine priority areas, including:

- Continuation of the food security policy by, among other things, supporting growth in the farm sector - increasing productivity, diversifying livestock production, and encouraging diversification in food consumption with an emphasis on the least well-off;

- Improving the output of agricultural services, in part by involving beneficiaries (professional farming associations) more closely in their scheduling and even management;

- Ensuring sustainable development of natural resources and the protection of the environment.

For the ESMAP programme, we have concentrated on the segment concerning the July 1992 domestic energy strategy, the long-term objective of which is to arrive at a sustainable environmental balance between supply and demand for fuel wood as a raw material.

PNAE, a national environmental policy tool, was adopted in 1994. It occupies a pivotal position in the range of sectoral strategies with an impact on natural resources management. It is anchored in all the above (PAFN, SDAM, EMSAP, LPDA) and related (PNDH, PD/PDRSOC, PCAIB) sectoral strategies. It takes the form of five large intervention programmes: urban; rural; coastline and sea; cultural and services; and environmental administration support.

Desertification control issues are covered under the rural programme, a major concern of which is all-round protection for water and land resources by means of river basin management: this is the kingpin in Guinea's efforts to combat desertification.

PNDH, adopted in 1997, is rooted in national development concerns and priorities:

- governance and participation;

- access to basic social services;

- strengthening of human resources;

- environmental protection and management.

Two components of this central programme have already begun to prove their worth in the field: the Framework Programme for the Promotion of Decentralization and strengthening of capacities in civil society, which is part of a series of measures to recast the country's political and institutional foundations; and the Framework Programme for Grass-Roots Initiative Support, a consistent raft of interdependent policies, strategies for action and investments designed to attain the national objective of combating poverty by the year 2010.

Desertification control in Guinea is conducted by means of activities and programmes under subregional integrated projects, represented by:

1. The Upper Niger and Upper Gambia Basins Development Programme

2. The Natural Resources Management Project/USAID

3. The Gambia River Basin Development Organization: OMVG/PGRN

C. Institutional measures for CCD implementation

A National Coordinating Committee was set up to guide the application of the Convention. The Committee, which serves as the national coordinating body, is encountering operational difficulties. Support is now urgently required to enable it to meet the complex goals of the Convention.

D. Participatory process in the formulation and execution of the programme of action

Mention should be made here of the very active role played by one national non-governmental organization, Guinée Ecologie, which is associated with the implementation of the Convention at the highest level.

E. Consultative process underpinning NPA formulation and execution

Here it should be pointed out that a CILSS expert had discussions and exchanges of views with all the parties concerned with the implementation of the Convention.

F. Measures called for under the NPA

After the visit by a CILSS mission in October 1997, the national focal point sent a memorandum to the Ministry then responsible (the Ministry of Capital Development).

The memorandum made a series of recommendations to the various parties involved in the implementation of the Convention, pursuant to the views expressed and discussions that took place between the focal point team and the visiting CILSS expert.

Recommendation to the national body (DNE) responsible for steering the process

- to consider and draw up a six-stage indicative programme as proposed by CILSS to Sahelian countries and countries belonging to the Economic Community of West African States, and to seek to make the national coordinating body more dynamic.

Recommendations to Guinea's development partners

- to establish a donor coordination framework and designate a leader;

- to provide backing on the basis of a clear, detailed indicative programme to be produced and submitted by the Government to all Guinea's partners in cooperation.

Recommendation to the Government

- to take three steps that would yield an efficient, bankable programme.

Lobbying of a country's development partners by the national authorities is clear evidence of interest in the Convention to Combat Desertification. The second, more urgent, sign is the constitution of a national coordinating body, as the Convention requires.

G. Financial resources allocated under the national budget to support implementation of the Convention, and fiancial assistance and technical cooperation received and required, with an indication of needs and their relative priorities

On the subject of the national budget, note should be taken of the creation of an environmental protection fund which could serve as a source of financing for the implementation of the Convention.

H. Review and evaluation of benchmarks and indicators used to measure progress

Of the various stages in the process of implementing the Convention, Guinea has just completed the first (staging public information and awareness campaigns and beginning the NPA formulation process).

Implementation of the Convention in Guinea is somewhat behindhand. By contrast, the campaign against desertification as a process of land degradation is well advanced.

Emphasis must nevertheless be laid on the many difficulties with financing activities to combat desertification among the donor communities.

Notes

1/ Reproduced without formal editing by the UNCCD secretariat.

2/ National Poverty Alleviation Plan.

3/ Ministry of Agriculture; Ministry of Sea, Tourism and Transport; Ministry of Infrastructure and Housing; Ministry of Trade, Industry and Energy; Ministry of Defence; Ministry of Education; and Ministry of Health.

4/ Decree-Law No. 73/97, 29 December.

5/ Source: "Mesa Redonda com os Parceiros de Desenvolvimento - 10-11 Junho 1999"; "Conjuntura" December 1998 - Ministry of Finance (Economia nacional, síntese); Club du Sahel, Mars 1999.